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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 NAIROBI 002203

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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OTR](#)
SUBJECT: COUNTRY CLEARANCE FOR MARIE-CLAIRE SOW

Ref: Email May 17th 2006

¶1. USAID grants country clearance for the visit of Marie-Claire Sow, Senior Acquisition & Assistance Specialist from May 24th to 26th, 2006 to perform Acquisition and Assistance services for USAID/Uganda. USAID switchboard number is 254-2-8622000 and after-hour telephone number is 254-2-856-2825. Control officer is Mr. Michael Rossman, telephone number extension 2318 and home phone 254-20-581-480. A driver from Express Travel, the embassy travel agent, will meet you after you exit the baggage claim area. If you do not see the driver, inquire at the Europcar/Express Travel Group counter. Cost for transport is 20 U.S. dollars per round trip.

¶2. Security Assessment

Nairobi is designated a critical threat post by the Department of State. The RSO is required to brief all TDY visitors staying more than one week, as soon as possible after their arrival at post.

Street crime: There is a high rate of street crime in downtown Nairobi, and reports of group attacks and muggings are on the rise throughout the country. Pickpockets and thieves carry out "snatch and run" crimes on city streets and near crowds. Visitors have found it safer not to carry valuables, but rather to store them in hotel safety deposit boxes or safe rooms. Walking alone or at night downtown is not recommended as attacks have taken place on public streets and parks. The RSO recommends leaving all important documents (passports, plane tickets, etc.) in a hotel safe and not wearing any jewelry on the street. In addition, visitors should avoid hanging a camera around their necks, carrying a protruding wallet, and carrying or showing large amounts of money in public.

Road safety/automobile travel: While traveling in vehicles, doors should be kept locked and windows rolled up. Carjacking is common in Nairobi and diplomatic vehicles and personnel are not immune to these attacks by armed thieves. Highway bandits are active on roads leading to the border areas.

Firearms: The Government of Kenya (and the mission firearms policy) prohibits the importing and carrying of firearms except for U.S. law enforcement officers engaged in protective security or investigative duties.

¶3. Climate: Weather conditions in Nairobi are sunny and mild year-round with daily temperatures ranging between 50 and 80 degrees Fahrenheit. In April and May, it rains frequently and daytime temperatures are lower. From June through September, dry, but often cloudy weather persists with cool nights. From October through November there is occasional rain, but most days are sunny and warm.

¶4. Health: Due to the high altitude, Nairobi is not a malarial area and malaria prophylaxis is not needed; but the risk of malaria outside Nairobi is significant. Therefore, if you are planning to travel outside Nairobi, particularly to areas below 3,500 feet elevation, it is advisable to begin using oral malarial medication before arrival and for four weeks following departure. In addition, every effort should be made to use insect repellents, proper clothing, and barriers which discourage/prevent mosquito bites. Travelers should also carry immunization records with valid yellow fever immunization as well as being current with other inoculations. The embassy medical unit advises that local tap water is not potable. Bottled water is safe to drink and can be purchased in local hotels, restaurants and grocery stores.

¶5. Internal travel: Travel via passenger train in Kenya is unsafe, particularly during the rainy seasons. The trains and tracks lack routine maintenance and safety checks. Likewise, public ground transportation in Kenya, particularly after dark, should be avoided for safety and security reasons. Good bush vehicles (four-wheel drive), as well as normal rental cars (with or without drivers) are available, but must be paid for in cash or with a charge card. Travel by road is right-hand drive. It is inadvisable to travel at night outside well-traveled areas due to the lack of lighting, road signs, and warning signals on broken down vehicles. Many drivers exercise poor judgment and drive too fast. Traffic accidents are common. Use of

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seat belts is mandatory.

¶6. General: TDY membership in the American Employees Association (AEA) is available for five U.S. dollars per week or one dollar per day. The AEA Morale Store offers a limited supply of liquor, soda, beer, snacks, embassy souvenirs, and Kenyan crafts. All products are sold in U.S. dollars. Cash and travelers checks are acceptable; no personal checks are acceptable. Accommodation exchange facilities are available upon presentation of a copy of official TDY orders. The current exchange rate is approximately 78 Kenya shillings to the U.S. dollar. TDY personnel wishing to use the APO are required to present a copy of their TDY/leave orders to the APO supervisor. Military members must also produce a valid ID card.

7. Entry requirements: A visa to enter Kenya is mandatory. This applies to U.S. citizens arriving for any purpose and regardless of type of passport. Travelers may obtain a visa in advance at a Kenyan embassy or consulate. Alternatively, a visa can be obtained at the airport for a voucherable charge of 50 U.S. dollars, but lines may be long and processing time slow. Important- Passports must be valid or at least 6 months from date of arrival. Other nationalities need to check with Mission or the Kenyan Embassy regarding requirements. Evidence of yellow fever immunization is usually requested upon entry to Kenya.

¶8. Departure: Each person departing Kenya (regardless of age or type of passport) must pay a 20 U.S. dollar departure tax payable in Kenya shillings or U.S. dollars, unless it has been included in the price of your ticket. Further, there is a 300 Kenya shilling departure tax imposed on all domestic flights.

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